

## California Department of Transportation

DISTRICT 4  
OFFICE OF TRANSIT AND COMMUNITY PLANNING  
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[www.dot.ca.gov](http://www.dot.ca.gov)



March 23, 2022

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Brian Oh, Comprehensive Planning Manager  
City of Santa Rosa  
2550 Ventura Ave  
Santa Rosa, CA 95403

**Governor's Office of Planning & Research**

**Mar 23 2022**

### STATE CLEARINGHOUSE

#### **Re: Sonoma Developmental Center Specific Plan Notice of Preparation (NOP) for Draft Environmental Impact Report (DEIR)**

Dear Brian Oh:

Thank you for including the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) in the environmental review process for the Sonoma Developmental Center Specific Plan. We are committed to ensuring that impacts to the State's multimodal transportation system and to our natural environment are identified and mitigated to support a safe, sustainable, integrated and efficient transportation system. The following comments are based on our review of the February 2022 NOP.

#### **Project Understanding**

The Sonoma Developmental Center Specific Plan will provide a vision and guiding principles for redevelopment on the previous Sonoma Developmental Center site. The plan will allow for the development of 450 to 1,000 residential units, office and commercial space, parks, and the preservation of open space.

#### **Travel Demand Analysis**

With the enactment of Senate Bill (SB) 743, Caltrans is focused on maximizing efficient development patterns, innovative travel demand reduction strategies, and multimodal improvements. For more information on how Caltrans assesses Transportation Impact Studies, please review Caltrans' Transportation Impact Study Guide ([link](#)).

If the project meets the screening criteria established in the City's adopted Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT) policy to be presumed to have a less-than-significant VMT impact and exempt from detailed VMT analysis, please provide justification to support the

exempt status in alignment with the City's VMT policy. Projects that do not meet the screening criteria should include a detailed VMT analysis in the DEIR, which should include the following:

- VMT analysis pursuant to the City's guidelines. Projects that result in automobile VMT per capita above the threshold of significance for existing (i.e. baseline) city-wide or regional values for similar land use types may indicate a significant impact. If necessary, mitigation for increasing VMT should be identified. Mitigation should support the use of transit and active transportation modes. Potential mitigation measures that include the requirements of other agencies such as Caltrans are fully enforceable through permit conditions, agreements, or other legally-binding instruments under the control of the City.
- A schematic illustration of walking, biking and auto conditions at the project site and study area roadways. Potential traffic safety issues to the State Transportation Network (STN) may be assessed by Caltrans via the Interim Safety Guidance ([link](#)).
- The project's primary and secondary effects on pedestrians, bicycles, travelers with disabilities and transit performance should be evaluated, including countermeasures and trade-offs resulting from mitigating VMT increases. Access to pedestrians, bicycle, and transit facilities must be maintained.

### **Transportation Improvements**

We encourage a sufficient allocation of fair share contributions toward multimodal and regional transit improvements to fully mitigate cumulative impacts to regional transportation. We also strongly support measures to increase sustainable mode shares, thereby reducing VMT. Caltrans welcomes the opportunity to work with the City and local partners to secure the funding for needed mitigation. Traffic mitigation- or cooperative agreements are examples of such measures.

Please identify in text and graphics existing and proposed improvements for the pedestrian, bicycle, and transit networks. The City should estimate the cost of needed improvements, expansion, and maintenance for the Plan area, as well as identify viable sources of funding, correlated with the pace of improvements, and a scheduled plan for implementation along with the DEIR.

Please consider the following Caltrans projects within the vicinity of the Sonoma Developmental Center site when developing the specific plan:

- **Project ID: 0414000025 / EA 0J680** – SON/12/PM 9.5-31.3, In Marin and Sonoma Counties at various locations, highway worker safety improvements;

- **Project ID: 04190000485 / EA 4Q830** – SON/PM 12/27.8 – 31.6, In Sonoma County on SR-12 from Kenwood Inn and Spa in Kenwood to Babb Road in Glen Ellen, widen shoulder to 8' standard and provide centerline and shoulder rumble strips;
- **Project ID: 0413000080 / EA 4H050** – SON/12/PM 25.8-33.3, In and near Sonoma, at Sonoma Creek Bridge No. 200027, Stuart Creek Bridge No. 20-0025 and Hooker Creek Bridge No. 20-0030, scour mitigation.

Please note that Caltrans' State Route (SR)-12 West Transportation Concept Report (TCR) does not call for additional capacity improvements in this area as the Route along with Arnold Drive should already provide sufficient capacity for vehicular throughput. Hence, a new potential route to connect Arnold Drive to SR-12 should be examined further as it may not be consistent with the State's goals for GHG reductions. The SR-12 TCR recommends strategies that align with the NOP's proposal for bicycle and pedestrian connections in the area and should be prioritized over creating a route that increases vehicular throughput.

### **Lead Agency**

As the Lead Agency, the City of Santa Rosa is responsible for all project mitigation, including any needed improvements to the STN. The project's fair share contribution, financing, scheduling, implementation responsibilities and lead agency monitoring should be fully discussed for all proposed mitigation measures.

### **Equitable Access**

If any Caltrans facilities are impacted by the project, those facilities must meet American Disabilities Act (ADA) Standards after project completion. As well, the project must maintain bicycle and pedestrian access during construction. These access considerations support Caltrans' equity mission to provide a safe, sustainable, and equitable transportation network for all users.

### **Encroachment Permit**

Please be advised that any permanent work or temporary traffic control that encroaches onto Caltrans' Right of Way (ROW) requires a Caltrans-issued encroachment permit. As part of the encroachment permit submittal process, you may be asked by the Office of Encroachment Permits to submit a completed encroachment permit application package, digital set of plans clearly delineating Caltrans' ROW, digital copy of signed, dated and stamped (include stamp expiration date) traffic control plans, this comment letter, your response to the comment letter, and where applicable, the following items: new or amended Maintenance Agreement (MA), approved Design Standard Decision Document (DSDD), approved encroachment exception request, and/or airspace lease agreement. Your application package may be emailed to [D4Permits@dot.ca.gov](mailto:D4Permits@dot.ca.gov).

Brian Oh, Comprehensive Planning Manager

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Please note that Caltrans is in the process of implementing an online, automated, and milestone-based Caltrans Encroachment Permit System (CEPS) to replace the current permit application submittal process with a fully electronic system, including online payments. The new system is expected to be available during 2022. To obtain information about the most current encroachment permit process and to download the permit application, please visit <https://dot.ca.gov/programs/traffic-operations/ep/applications>.

Thank you again for including Caltrans in the environmental review process. Should you have any questions regarding this letter, or for future notifications and requests for review of new projects, please email [LDR-D4@dot.ca.gov](mailto:LDR-D4@dot.ca.gov).

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Mark Leong". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

MARK LEONG  
District Branch Chief  
Local Development Review

c: State Clearinghouse